

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AID-05 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 EB-07 /085 W

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R 301058Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NIAMEY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0547

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY BAMAKO

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU

AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 1602

E.O. 11652: NGDS

TAGS: PBOR, ML, UV

SUMBECT: LOME MEDIATION COMMISSION

REF: .NIAMEY 1372

SUMMARY: IN RECENT MEETINGS WITH PRES KOUNTCHE (APR 29) AND FNMIN DJERMAKOYE (APR 28), I HAVE PURSUED QUESTION OF LOME MEDIATION COMMISSION'S EFFORTS TO RESOLVE MALI-UPPER VOLTA BORDER DISPUTE. BOTH ARE WORRIED ABOUT SITUATION AND PARALYZING EFFECT IT IS HAVING ON NIGER'S REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. ACCORDING TO THEM, OUTLOOK FOR RESOLUTION OF DISPUTE WITHOUT OUTBREAK OF HOSTILITIES DOES NOT RPT NOT APPEAR BIRGHT. GIST OF KOUNTCHE AND DJERMAKOYE COMMENTS FOLLOWS. END SUMMARY.

1. DJERMAKOYE WHO IS MEMBER OF MINISTERIAL LEVEL MEDIATION COMMISSION AND VISITED UPPER VOLTA AND MALI MID-PARIL TOLD ME APRIL 28 THAT HE WAS STURCK BY WAR ATMOSPHERE
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IN OUAGADOUGOU AND BY DESIRE FOR REVENGE. HE SAID

MOSSI ARE HARD PEOPLE TO CONTROL ONCE THEY GET AROUSED AND THEY SEEM BENT ON MILITARY ADVENTURE. THEIR INNATE SENSE OF SELF-CONFIDENCE HAS BEEN BOLSTERED BY SUBSTANTIAL ARM PURCHASES.

2. AS FOR VISIT TO MALI, DJERMAKOE CONFIRMED THAT GOM HAD FINALLY AGREED TO ALLOW MILITARY SUBCOMMISSION TO VISIT DESPUTED AREA, BUT IT WAS STRICTLY CONTROLLED GUIDED TOUR WHICH GAVE SUBCOMMISSION NO OPPORTUNITY TO UNDERTAKE INDEPENDENT INVESTIGATION. SUBCOMMISSION'S WORK HAD BEEN FURTHER COMPLICATED BY MALIAN REFUSAL TO RELEASE TWO VOTAIQUE PRISONERS AND TRUCK EVEN THOUGH THIS HAD BEEN ALLEGEDLY AGREED TO AT SUMMIT MEETIN IN NIAMEY BY TRAORE AT REQUEST OF SENGHOR AND KOUNTCHE.

3. DJERMAKOYE ADDED THAT HE HAD IMPRESSION THAT BOTH LAMIZANA AND TRAORE WERE THOROUGHLY TIRED OF ISSUE BUT BOTH WERE CAPTIVES OF YOUNGER OFFICERS IN GOVERNMENT AND EACH WAS POWERLESS TO MAKE FIRST CONCILIATORY GESTURE TOWARDS THE OTHER. ASKED WHETHER SHUTTLE DIPLOMACY MIGHT HELP TO BRING BOTH SIDES TOGETHER, DJERMAKOYE SAID THIS WAS POSSIBILITY BUT ONLY AT CHIEF OF STATE LEVEL. MINISTERS COULD MAKE SUGGESTIONS TO CHIEFS OF STATE BUT PROSPECTS FOR ENDING CONFRONTATION COULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED AT LATTER LEVEL WITH PERSONAL DIPLOMACY.

4. DJERMAKOYE CONCLUDED HE WAS PESSIMISTIC ABOUT PEACEFUL SOLUTION UNTIL AFTER UPPER VOLTA PLAYED ITS MILITARY CARD AS MALI HAD IN DECEMBER. MEANWHILE, CONFRONTATION WAS COSTING NIGER DEARLY. REGIONAL PROJECTS SUCH AS LIPTAKO GOURMA WERE ON DEAD CENTER AND REGIONAL ORGANIZATIONS WERE PARALYZED BECAUSE OF WRANGLING OR NON-PARTICIPATION OF MALI OR UPPER VOLTA REPRESENTATIVES. HE ADDED RUEFULLY THAT ONE EFFECT OF DISPUTE WAS TO TRANSFER TO NIAMEY NUMEROUS MEETINGS THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN HELD IN EITHER BAMAKO OR OUAGADOUGOU AND THIS WAS DEVELOPING INTO HEAVY BURDEN ON NIGER'S LIMITED CONFERENCE FACILITIES AND BUDGER.

5. PRES KOUNTCHE'S COMMENTS WERE ALONG SAME GENERAL
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LINES. HE CONFIRMED THAT AT SUMMIT MEETING IN NIAMEY HE AND SENGHOR HAD INDUCED TRAORE TO AGREE TO VISIT OF MILITARY SUBCOMMISSION TO DISPUTED AREA ON MALIAN SIDE OF BORDER AND BOTH BOTH HAD LECTURED TO LAMIZANA AND TRAORE ON IMPORTANCE OF NOT LETTING THEMSELVES BECOME PRISONERS OF PUBLIC OPINION. NEITHER SEEMED ABLE TO CONTROL SITUATION. FURTHER, TRAORE HAD NOT LIVED UP TO PE WORK TO GIVE MILITARY SUBCOMMISSION UNRESTRICTED

ACCESS TO DISPUTED AREA. KOUNTCHE ADDED THAT HE WAS READY TO HELP IN ANY WAY BUT HE FELT LEAD IN ANY CONCILIATION EFFORT SHOULD BE TAKEN BY EYADEMA OF TOGO AS PRESIDENT OF MEDIATION COMMISSION.

6. COMMENT: BOTH KOUNTCHE AND DJERMAKOYE APPEARED WORRIED AND DISCOURAGED. THEY SEEMED TO FEEL THAT CONFLICT HAS MOMENTUM OF ITS OWN AND CHANCES FOR RATIONAL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTE WOULD ARISE ONLY AFTER UPPER VOLTA HAD MADE MILITARY EFFORT IN ATTEMPT TO RESTORE NATIONAL HONOR. MEANWHILE THEY BOTH DEPLORED PROSPECT OF CONFLICT BETWEEN TWO SAHELIAN STATES RECOVERING FROM DROUGHT AND DIVERSION OF NATIONAL RESOURCES FROM DEVELOPMENT TO ARMS PURCHASES.HECK

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